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NEWCOMB POTTERY

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In the advance which artistic handicraft has made throughout the country the art of pottery has played a conspicuous part. The ready adaptability of clay to artistic use, the beauty and permanency of vitreous color, and the satisfactory completeness of the result, make pottery a subject of most tempting promise to the artist. It seems possible in this craft, in which no one comes between the artist and his completed work, to achieve a more individual and thorough expression of his idea than in many crafts in which the design is all he is called upon to furnish.

The much prized individual touch, seen only when the machine is absent, the unity of purpose exhibited from inception to finish where the designer is also the workman who carries the idea to its completion, is shown more frequently in pottery than perhaps in most other handicrafts. These thoughts can, of course, only be suggested in those studio workshops in which commercial bulk of output is not the first aim. The main current of industrial production must doubtless always be otherwise, but a number of American pottery manufacturers

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have achieved success while holding art as their guiding principle. Rookwood, Dedham, Gruby, and many others are celebrated, each in its own way, for peculiar excellence of design and color which give to their productions universal value and interest.

Perhaps the youngest of the group of American art potteries is the Newcomb, the subject of this notice. It is the outgrowth of peculiar circumstances, having had its origin in the uncommercial atmosphere of the art department of a college for women in New Orleans. The desire and teaching of the school was to show that art may fitly be expressed in the design of objects of common use as well as in the painting of pictures. Gradually the idea of a studio-workshop evolved which should be a means of furnishing profitable employment of the



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freest and most individual character to those fitted for and desirous of pursuing art as a means of livelihood. The enterprise, directed as it is toward developing indigenous qualities, deals solely with material at hand. The clay is quarried in neighboring territory. The subjects of design are drawn from familiar surroundings. From the careful fostering of this idea of locality has sprung a characteristic product of genuine value. The industry has by no means attained the full stature of its possibilities, but its character is mature, and the collector may discern at a glance the personal note.

The dominant color is greenish blue, although red, yellow, and black are often present.

Underglaze décoration, either in slip upon wet clay or upon the biscuit, is the rule, but design sometimes ends with the form, the

color being supplied in the glaze, which is varied and blended by the heat of the furnace.

The optimist for American art sees in such application of art to industry a future of increasing worth and dignity for its unwritten history.



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RECENT EXHIBITIONS IN NEW YORK.

The exhibition of the American Water-Color Society was held this year in the smaller ballroom of the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel. It was an unfortunate selection, for the room did not lend itself to a display of pictures and the space was cramped. As a consequence of the small quarters only a modest number of works by outsiders was accepted, and the show was by no means up to the average of previous years. The archaic custom of rights of membership permitting societaires to send six works without examination of the jury worked the usual damage, and old-timers whose only claim to membership was good-fellowship, whose art was never worthy, and who have fallen by the wayside with the years, were in the usual evidence with many examples that gave a dreary aspect to the walls.

The Evans prize was awarded to B. West Clinedinst, a dexterous handler of his medium, for a picture ("Long Ago") of an old man and child. With due respect for the excellence of this work and the reputation of Mr. Clinedinst, who is known as an able illustrator, there were other works that came much nearer the standards usually set for prize-winning pictures. Louis Loeb, with a rarely beautiful head of a young woman, Rosina Emmet Sherwood; Albert Sterner, with a charming figure of a woman in an artistic interior; Arthur I. Keller, with a novel composition of two girls in a library, clever to a degree